





Every ending is arbitrary, because the end is where you write The End. A period, a dot of punctuation, a point of stasis. A pinprick in the paper: you could put your eye to it and see through, to the other side, to the beginning of something else.

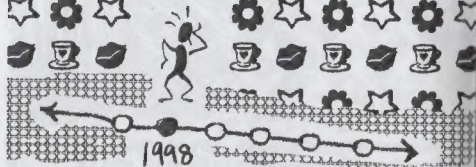
— Margaret Atwood,
The Robber Bride

1996

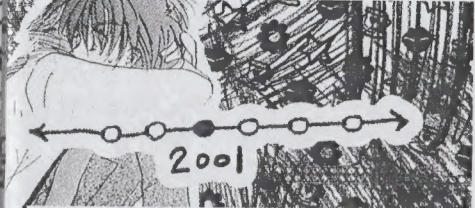
My family lived right across the Sagrada Familia Chapel. After Masses, the caretaker, Kuya Benjie, let me take home used newsprinted missalettes and waxes of tri folded liturgical calendars so I could hand them out to classmates during Religion classes (In fact, I didn't. I just really liked the feeling of holding a thick sheaf of paper in my hands). I was a big fan of the Panorama, Manila Bulletin's Sunday magazine. I read the poetry and vignette section at the back and pored over the inky gestural illustrations. I read the submission guidelines. Much to my mother's amusement, I asked for a mimeograph machine for my ninth birthday.

The summer before we moved, my dad purchased a heavy, black and white secondhand laptop prone to overheating. I wrote articles and essays in Microsoft Word. Later on, they were vandalised by my oldest cousin, who replaced all the nouns with words he learned from WWF Royal Rumble and Beavis and Butthead episodes.

hello is what you say
to a candy ass nerdy
twerp farting down the
street



Instead of paying attention, I secretly read a borrowed copy of Little Women in all my classes. Heavily influenced by the March sisters' Pickwick Portfolio, I published the Caiña Chronicle, a one-page newsletter printed with the noisy dot matrix printer I begged by dad to install. Peppered with cheesy clip art borders and clashing fonts, The Caiña Chronicle shamelessly ripped off the Portfolio format and had a feature article about the Philippine Commission on Women. It was a topic I knew nothing about, but I wasn't shy of ending every sentence with a question mark and an exclamation point(?!). I gave the only copy I made to one of my titas, who praised it highly and often asked about a second issue, which I never finished.



I was trying to be a dedicated anime fan as much my meagre allowance, slow dial up internet and lack of cable would allow. My friend Louise gives me an anime fanzine (I forgot what it was called) and I was hooked. Ideas of making a contributor-run (and decidedly better) fanzine flowered until nipped in the bud one day when a girl I was thinking of asking to contribute got caught drawing Gundam Wing yaoi to illustrate her Trowa/Quatre fanfiction in Social Studies class. Afraid of the prospect of having my teachers read my fanfics and my parents called in, I abandoned the idea and retreated to the secrecy of fanfiction.net and Geocities fanshrines.



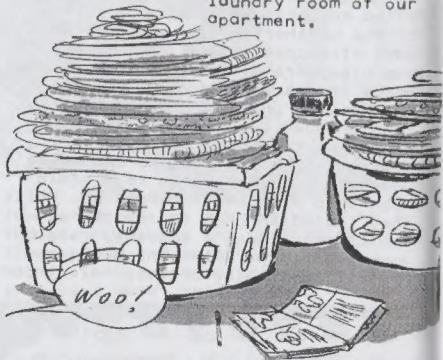
2003

I was fifteen years old, angsty, ~~crank~~ cranky, in the throes of my pseudo goth phase and reeling from the overzealousness of my Christian group enthusiasms of the previous year. I was failing Chemistry, Geometry AND Advanced Algebra because I drew on my test papers instead of answering the questions. My weekly reflection papers for Religion class always featured long haired, empty eyed girls crying red permanent marker blood (I got high marks for them, which confused me). My Livejournal friends were deluged with more existential poetry than they bargained for.

In the middle of what I described in my diary as a "turbulent shitpile of shit", my friend Pat gave me a copy of Jawbreaker zine. Subtitled "Hard Candy for Kickass Pinays", it was hardly the tutoring help my teachers suggested, yet it was exactly what I needed. Jawbreaker talked about Pinay girl (and grrrl) culture, sex, feminism, atheism and decolonization in a friendly, truthy way that spoke to me more than any Home Economics lecture or poselytizing youth evangelist ever could. It was my window to a wider worldview, though back then reading it only felt like I was getting away with something when everything else seemed at odds and out of control.

of frenzied Googling, I found myself sneaking printouts of clip art and zine backgrounds at school and making lists of what I wanted to write about. For the rest of the year, zines became my only obsession. I walked around giddy and wakeful and excited about the possibilities.

the following year, I finished my first 'real' zine in the laundry room of our apartment.

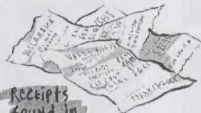


INDISPENSABLE ZINE MATERIALS!

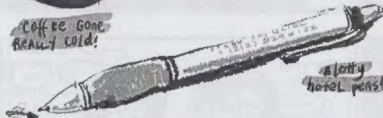
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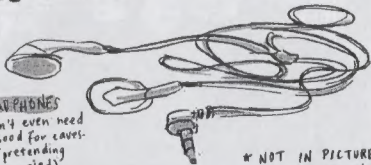
Coffee Gone
Really cold!



Receipts
found in
coat pockets!



Stuffy
hotel pens!



EAR/HEADPHONES
(they don't even need
to work! Good for caves-
dropping/pretending
you are occupied)

* NOT IN PICTURE:
all manner of
distraction

ECHO: ECHO: #10

is by KEET G. _

SPRING 2013